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RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Fifth Committee (A/51/750)]

51/221. Questions relating to the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997

A

The General Assembly

I

REVISED ESTIMATES RESULTING FROM THE RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Takes note of the estimates of 501,000 United States dollars under section 13 (Crime control) and 595,200 dollars under section 14 (International drug control) on the understanding that such additional appropriations as may be necessary will be determined in accordance with the procedures for the use and operation of the contingency fund, taking into account the results of the first performance report of the Secretary-General on the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997;[1]

II

REQUEST FOR A SUBVENTION TO THE UNITED NATIONS INSTITUTE FOR DISARMAMENT RESEARCH RESULTING FROM THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE INSTITUTE ON THE WORK PROGRAMME OF THE INSTITUTE FOR 1997

Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General[2] and of the recommendations thereon of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and approves the subvention of 213,000 dollars for the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research for 1997;

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[1] A/C.5/51/38.

[2] A/C.5/51/33.

III

INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY

Recalling its resolution 48/263 of 28 July 1994, in which it decided to fund the administrative expenses of the International Seabed Authority until the end of the year following the year during which the Agreement relating to the implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 entered into force,

Recalling also its resolution 50/214 of 23 December 1995, in which it made provision for the budget of the Authority for 1996,

Having considered the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the budget of the Authority for 1997,[3]

1. Approves the recommendation thereon of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report;[4]

2. Requests the International Seabed Authority to take all necessary action to ensure that its budget for 1997 is implemented with a maximum of efficiency and economy;

3. Authorizes the Secretary-General to provide conference services for the meetings of the Authority to be held from 17 to 28 March and from 18 to 29 August 1997 from the resources available under section 26E (Conference services) of the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997;[5]

4. Decides to make a provision of 2,750,500 dollars for the Authority for its administrative expenses in 1997 under section 33 (International Seabed Authority) of the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997;

5. Decides also that the provision for 1997 should be charged to the contingency fund;

IV

FIRST PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

1. Takes note of the first performance report of the Secretary-General on the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997[1] and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary questions;[6]

2. Reaffirms its resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986;

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[3] A/C.5/51/21.

[4] A/51/7/Add.2; see Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 7.

[5] Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/50/6/Rev.1).

[6] A/51/7/Add.6; see Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 7.

3. Notes that, according to the first performance report, involuntary separations of staff have not been used in order to implement its resolutions 50/231 and 50/232 of 7 June 1996;

4. Approves a net decrease of 5,580,200 dollars in the appropriations approved for the biennium 1996-1997 and a net decrease of 19,682,000 dollars in the estimates of income for the biennium 1996-1997, to be apportioned among expenditure and income sections as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General;

V

CONTINGENCY FUND

Notes that a balance of 15,358,200 dollars remains in the contingency fund.

89th plenary meeting
18 December 1996

B

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General[7] and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[8]

Recalling its resolution 50/214, in which it decided, inter alia, that the vacancy rate would be 6.4 per cent for both Professional and General Service posts, and its resolutions 50/215 A to C and 50/216 of 23 December 1995 and 50/230 of 7 June 1996,

Recalling also the request made to the Secretary-General in section II, paragraph 7, of resolution 50/214 to submit, as soon as possible, and no later than 31 March 1996, to the General Assembly, through the Advisory Committee, a report containing proposals of possible savings for its consideration and approval,

Reaffirming the role of the current intergovernmental process in reviewing the efficiency and reform of the programmes and activities and the need to avoid duplication,

Recognizing the need to integrate all elements of internal reviews of efficiency in the Secretariat,

Recognizing also the role of the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts in management reforms and in ensuring adequate programme delivery and efficiency,

Regretting that the information requested by the Advisory Committee on personnel- and programme-related issues, including whether consultants were

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[7] A/C.5/50/57/Add.1.

[8] A/51/7/Add.1; see Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 7.

hired to carry out work previously performed by staff on posts, was not provided,

Recalling its decision 50/506 of 17 September 1996,

1. Reaffirms its resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987;

2. Reaffirms also part VI of its resolution 45/248 B of 21 December 1990, which relates to the involvement of different bodies in the budgetary process;

3. Reaffirms further the requirement of all Member States to fulfil their financial obligations as set out in the Charter of the United Nations promptly and in full;

4. Recognizes the detrimental effect of the withholding of assessed contributions on the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations;

5. Reaffirms that the authority to create, transfer and abolish posts under the regular budget is the prerogative of the General Assembly;

6. Recalls the authority of the Secretary-General as chief administrative officer, as provided for under Article 97 of the Charter;

7. Endorses the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[8] with the exception of paragraph 28, second sentence, and subject to the provisions of the present resolution;

8. Expresses its concern that the report of the Secretary-General does not contain a clear indication of the extent to which the approved vacancy level of 6.4 per cent has been exceeded in order to reach the savings called for in its resolution 50/214;

9. Reiterates its decision that savings in the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 should not affect the full implementation of mandated programmes and activities;

10. Reiterates that any proposal to change mandated programmes and activities is subject to prior approval of the General Assembly, through the Fifth Committee and other relevant bodies;

11. Notes the assurances of the Secretary-General that he will not take any decision on the involuntary separation of staff members, including those on the redeployment list, to achieve savings in the context of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/214;

12. Requests the Secretary-General, in the light of General Assembly decision 50/506, to report to the Fifth Committee during the resumed session of the Assembly on the progress achieved in the placement of the staff on the redeployment list, taking into account their skills and experience;

13. Requests that the information requested by the Advisory Committee in its report[8] be presented no later than 1 March 1997;

14. Requests the Secretary-General, in connection with paragraphs 25 to 31 of the report of the Advisory Committee, to report, through the Office of Internal Oversight Services, no later than 1 March 1997, on the use of consultants and associated contractual procedures in the United Nations during the calendar year 1996;

15. Also requests the Secretary-General to review the effect of vacant posts on programme delivery and to recommend, if appropriate, restoration of the funding of these posts in the context of the budget for the biennium 1998-1999;

16. Further requests the Secretary-General to take all necessary action to avoid duplication of efficiency review procedures;

17. Requests the Secretary-General to integrate and harmonize, where appropriate, efficiency reviews, including those of the intergovernmental machinery, with programme planning and budget reviews;

18. Also requests the Secretary-General to report to relevant intergovernmental bodies on the efficiency proposals which have programmatic and programme budget implications that require prior legislative approval;

19. Regrets that the programme performance report on the impact of approved savings measures on the implementation of mandated programmes and activities, requested in section II, paragraph 11, of its resolution 50/214, to be submitted no later than the end of its fiftieth session, has not been submitted;

20. Requests the Secretary-General to submit, no later than 1 March 1997, the above-mentioned programme performance report, and decides to consider it as a matter of priority during the first part of its resumed session;

21. Decides that no changes to the budget methodology, to established budgetary procedures and practices or to the financial regulations can be implemented without prior review and approval by the General Assembly, through the Advisory Committee, in accordance with agreed budgetary procedures.

89th plenary meeting
18 December 1996